



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region One
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Ref:DV075-01
February 12, 2000

TO: Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Helena, 59620-1704
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Bldg., PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks: Director's Office – Rich Clough; Fisheries Division – Karen Zackheim; Legal Unit
MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, 225 North Roberts, Veteran's Memorial Building, Helena,
59620-1201
Montana State Library, 1515 East Sixth Ave., Helena, 59620-1800
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, PO Box 1184, Helena, 59624
George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, 59624
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation, PO Box 728, Libby, 59923
Montana State Parks Association, PO Box 699, Billings, 59103
Joe Gutkoski, President, Montana River Action Network, 304 N 18th Ave., Bozeman, 59715
Rep. Rod Bitney, PO Box 10501, Kalispell, 59904-3501
Rep. Paul Sliter, PO Box 118, Somers, 59932
Rep. Roger Sommerville, PO Box 1104, Kalispell, 59903
Sen. Arnie Mohl, 3303 Hwy 2 E, Kalispell, 59901
Sen Bob Keenan, Box 697, Bigfork, 59911-0697
Flathead County Commissioners, 800 S Main, Kalispell, 59901
Flathead County Library, 247 First Avenue E, Kalispell, 59901
Stan Frasier, Montana Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1175, Helena, 59624
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, PO Box 595, Helena, 59624
Arlene Montgomery, Friends of the Wild Swan, PO Box 5103, Swan Lake, 59911
Warren Illi, Flathead Wildlife, Inc., PO Box 4, Kalispell, 59903
John Winnie, Trout Unlimited, PO Box 638, Kalispell, 59903-0638
Mike Baker, Director, Kalispell Parks and Recreation, PO Box 1997, Kalispell, 59903-1997
Mayor Bill Boharski, City of Kalispell, PO Box 1997, Kalispell, 59903-1997
Chris Kukulski, City Manager, City of Kalispell, PO Box 1997, Kalispell, 59903-1997
John Cloninger, Chief Instructor, Hooked on Fishing, FWP, 490 N Meridian Rd, Kalispell, 59901
Jim Mann, The Daily Inter Lake, PO Box 7610, Kalispell, 59904
Rep. Rob Raney, 212 S. 6th, Livingston, 59047

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region One, has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) for Dry Bridge Slough. The purpose of the project is to dredge and deepen the slough to improve water quality and fish habitat.

There were no changes to the draft EA; therefore, the draft becomes the final EA. A copy of the Decision Document is enclosed for your information.

Sincerely,


Dan Vincent
Regional Supervisor

DV/nli
Enclosure

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
and
DECISION NOTICE
for the
DREDGING of DRY BRIDGE SLOUGH**

December 27, 2000

Project Proposal:

1. To excavate and deepen existing pond to a depth of ten feet to improve survivability of trout through increased depth and water quality.
2. To improve water quality, and restock the pond with trout to provide an urban fishery for the Kalispell community.

Site Location and Characteristics:

Dry Bridge Slough is located in Flathead County on the east side of Kalispell along Woodland Avenue. The pond is part of a Kalispell city park. The legal description is T28N, R21W, and S17. The lake is two surface acres with a current maximum depth of four feet.

Project Justification:

The current shallow pond depth and heavy weed growth results in high summer water temperatures. During periods of ice cover, the pond loses all oxygen due to plant decomposition. Noxious levels of hydrogen sulfide and methane are also produced with accompanying strong odors.

The project would take the existing pond with the current maximum depth of four feet and excavate to a depth of ten feet. This would provide suitable depth and water quality to improve the survivability of stocked trout. Increased water volume and depth will also increase water quality and reduce production of noxious gas.

Environmental Impacts of Project:

No adverse effects are expected for adult amphibians, reptiles, birds, wild mammals, or humans. Some aquatic plants and insects are likely to be affected, but will repopulate the pond to near normal levels generally within one calendar year. The project will take place during winter when impacts with wildlife and humans are minimized. Disturbed areas will be reseeded.

Social Impacts:

The project will take about a week to ten days to complete. Short-term impacts are anticipated. There will be noise from the excavating equipment and dump trucks. Noise levels will be minimized since the pond sits down in a gully. There may be odors associated with excavation of the sediments. However, strong odors are already present at the outlet, and odors may decrease after the project is completed.

The pond perimeter is used for hiking and the haul road bisects a popular sledding hill. Warnings will have to be posted during the project, and a traffic guard may be necessary on the sledding hill. Truck traffic will probably make for tough sledding across the road until the next snowfall. Pond drawdown and excavation will be unsightly until the pond refills and plants regrow, which should occur in the spring of 2001.

Public Involvement:

In compliance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act, an environmental assessment was prepared and circulated for public comment from November 7 through November 30, 2000. Notices were advertised in the local newspaper, and copies of the EA were made available at local libraries and FWP, Region 1, headquarters in Kalispell.

- Three comments were received in favor of all aspects of the project.
- One comment voiced the concern that added use would disturb bird nesting. The site receives only minimal nesting now due to disturbance. There are segments of the slough immediately to the south without public access that provide adequate nesting habitat.

Decision:

Based on the comments and agreements for the need to improve water quality and fish habitat of Dry Bridge Slough, I recommend that the proposed project be implemented to fulfill the desired outcome of restoring of Dry Bridge Slough, and improving water quality and trout survival.



Dan Vincent, Region One Supervisor
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks



Date